

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-11 ISO-00 ARA-10 PM-05 NSC-05
SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01
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R 130901Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9513
INFO AMOMBASSY DAKAR 6351
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
UNSINT BAGHADAD 009
CINCEUR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NOUAKCHOTT 1302

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, ETRD, IR, MR,SS
SUBJECT: MAURITANIAN-ARAB WORLD RELATIONS: OULD DADDAH
MAINTAINS PACE

1. PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH HAS DEVOTED A LARGE PORTION OF MONTH TO RELATIONS WITH KEY AAB STATES.
 2. FROM MAY 5-7 IRAQI VICE PRESIDENT MA'RUF VISITED NOUAKCHOTT AT END OF TRIP WHICH HAD TAKEN HIM TO MADRID AND HAVANA. DURING THIS STAY, MA'RUF WAS GUEST OF PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH AT DINNER AND TWO MEN ALSO HELD SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS. ON MAY 6, MA'RUF AND MAURITANIAN EQUIPMENT AND TRANSPORT MINISTER
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MOHAMED SALAH, WHO WAS MA'RUF'S OFFICIAL HOST, SIGNED A COMMERCIAL AGREEMENT. THIS ACCORD CALLS FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF MEXED MAURITANIAN-IRAQI COMMISSION AND FOR GENERAL FACILITATION OF TRADE. DURING HIS STAY, MA'RUF ALSO ANNOUNCED SYMBOLIC GIFT TO MAURITANIAN COMMITTEE OF SUPPORT FOR DEFENSE OF THE NATION, AND MOHAMEDSALAH ANNOUNCED AT SOCIAL OCCASION THAT IRQIS WOULD BE FINANCING CONSTRU-

TION OF HOSPITAL AND HOUSING.

3. POLITICAL ISSUES DOWNPLAYED DURING MA'RUF VISIT. MA'RUF STATED IN RATHER MODERATE TERMS IRAQI POSITION ON MIDDLE EAST. FOR HIS PART, MOHAMED SALAH PRAISED IRAQ'S SUPPORT FOR 1975 PRO-MAURITANIAN UNGA RESOLUTION ON SAHARA.

4. ON MAY 8, OULD DADDAH SET OFF ON TRIP WHICH SO FAR TAKEN HIM TO KUWAIT, JORDAN AND WHICH WILL INCLUDE STOPS IN RIYADH, TUNNIS AND RABAT.

5. IN ASSESSING MA'RUF VISIT AND OULD DADDAH'S MIDEAST TRIP, FON MINISTRY OFFICIAL TOLD EMBOFF THAT POLITICAL RELATIONS WITH IRAQIS HAD ALWAYS BEEN GOOD AND THAT IRAQ'S KURDISH PROBLEM ASSURED LATTER'S CONTINUED SUPPORT OF MAURITANIAN POSITION ON SAHARA. KUWAIT TRIP, OFFICIAL NOTED, WOULD BE FOCUSED LARGELY ON OBTAINING FURTHER KUWAITI FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE HAVE HEARD FROM GOOD SOURCE THAT BOTH KUWAITIS AND SAUDIS HAVE BEEN SOMEWHAT PARSIMONIOUS WITH MAURITANIA SINCE BEGINNING OF YEAR, PERHAPS BECAUSE THEY NOW REQUIRE MORE CAREFUL DOCUMENTATION OF REQUESTS FOR AID. ON VISIT TO JORDAN OFFICIAL SAID THAT BALCK SEPTEMBER HAD CAST PALL OVER MAURITANIAN-JORDAN RELATIONS WHICH MAURITANIANS HAD UNTIL RECENTLY BEEN RELUCTANT TO REMOVE.

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6. COMMENT: WE AGREE WITH ASSESSMENT OF OUR DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUES THAT OULD DADDAH IS HAVING SOME SUCCESS IN STRENGTHENING HIS ARAB CONNECTIONS BEFORE KHARTOUM SUMMIT. CHOICE OF VISITORS AND VISITS ON BOTH RADICAL AND CONSERVATIVE WINGS OF ARAB WORLD SEEMS APT. ARABS STILL RELUCTANT TO BECOME INVOLVED IN SAHARA PROBLEM, BUT OULD DADDAH'S TACTICS SEEM WELL CALCULATED TO MAINTAIN LATENT SYMPATHY WHICH MAURITANIA COMMANDS AMONG THE BRETHREN.

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